

NORTHBROOK, IL – After the president vetoed legislation including language protecting Impact Aid payments to help North Chicago, Highland Park and Glenview Schools on Nov. 13, Congressman Kirk pledged to build bipartisan support for the important education assistance as lawmakers draft a new bill this month. The language included in the appropriations bill for the departments of Labor, Health and Human Services and Education was modeled on legislation introduced by Congressman Mark Kirk on January 4, 2007 (H.R. 12). Senators Durbin and Obama backed companion legislation in the Senate.

“The biggest hurdle for Impact Aid was passed by securing widespread support for the measure in both the U.S. House and Senate,” Congressman Kirk said. “With the help of Senators Durbin and Obama, we are working to ensure the next version that goes to the White House has the Impact Aid language for North Chicago, Highland Park/Highwood and Glenview school districts. It is our goal that by year’s end, Congress will pass and the president will sign legislation providing our kids with the education funds they deserve.”

Under the bipartisan language, all children of parents working at Naval Station Great Lakes and Fort Sheridan will be officially counted for Impact Aid purposes as part of the North Chicago school district. This reform will protect North Chicago’s “Heavy Impact” aid payments of over \$6,000 per student. Two years ago, North Chicago schools fell below the 30 percent military-child qualification to get Heavy Impact Aid, threatening the loss of nearly \$7 million in federal assistance. Working with Secretary of Education Spellings, Congressman Kirk invoked an unused provision of Impact Aid law to protect aid to North Chicago schools until the reforms of H.R. 12 are enacted.

Glenview and Highwood/Highland Park schools will also benefit. Since their children will be considered “Heavy Impact Aid” students under the new reform, reimbursements for education costs will rise from \$600 per child to approximately \$6,000. The increased funding under these reforms will be shared under an agreement between the three school districts. The new aid will particularly help these school districts now in the middle of an upgrade of housing in North Chicago, Fort Sheridan and Glenview.